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1987 WHO'S WHO OF AMERICA'S LARGEST INDEPE

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MARCH 4, 1987
A Cahners publication serving the total foodservice industry

RESTAURANTS & INSTITUTIONS

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*A special section for commercial operators only.

Real Dairy Discoveries, a service of American Dairy Association, follows page 100.

■ COVER STORY

AMERICA'S TOP 100 INDEPENDENTS

by Julie Mautner

All year long the pages of *R&I* are filled with stories about people who have overcome the obstacles and distinguished themselves in foodservice. But once a year we set out to pay tribute to an even more select group, the independent operators who have risen to the top, who run those restaurants that people absolutely *love* to eat at and who have made lots of money as a reward. Those who have cut the culinary mustard, if you will.

The Top 100 are nothing if not diverse, and their stories make fascinating reading. Wolfgang Puck knew he wanted to be a chef by the time he was 14 and persevered despite his father's attempts to dissuade him. Joe Baum acted as a consultant to some 300 restaurants before he actually created one for himself. Bob Longhi sold pension plans before buying a restaurant in Hawaii, almost on a whim. Hans Prager's family fled Nazi Germany and Prager worked as a busboy to help the family survive; thus began a lifelong love affair with foodservice.

Just what is an independent, really? And at what point does an independent become a chain? As in years past, we've set the limit at 10 restaurants per person. (This explains why you won't see restaurants owned by mini-chains such as Lettuce Entertain You or Restaurants Unlimited on the list.) We've listed each Top Independent by his single most successful concept.

We have omitted independents who are located in areas with unusually high traffic: theme parks such as EPCOT, casinos, airports, large hotels and other locations where built-in traffic constitutes an unfair advantage. Operators who lease space in small hotels, or who offer lodging as well as foodservice have not been disqualified.

Finally, in order to qualify for this year's Top Independents listing, every restaurant must be at least 1 year old, opened prior to January 1986. Following our four-page chart, which lists the Top 100 by their 1986 sales, are brief profiles of all those restaurants new to our list this year.

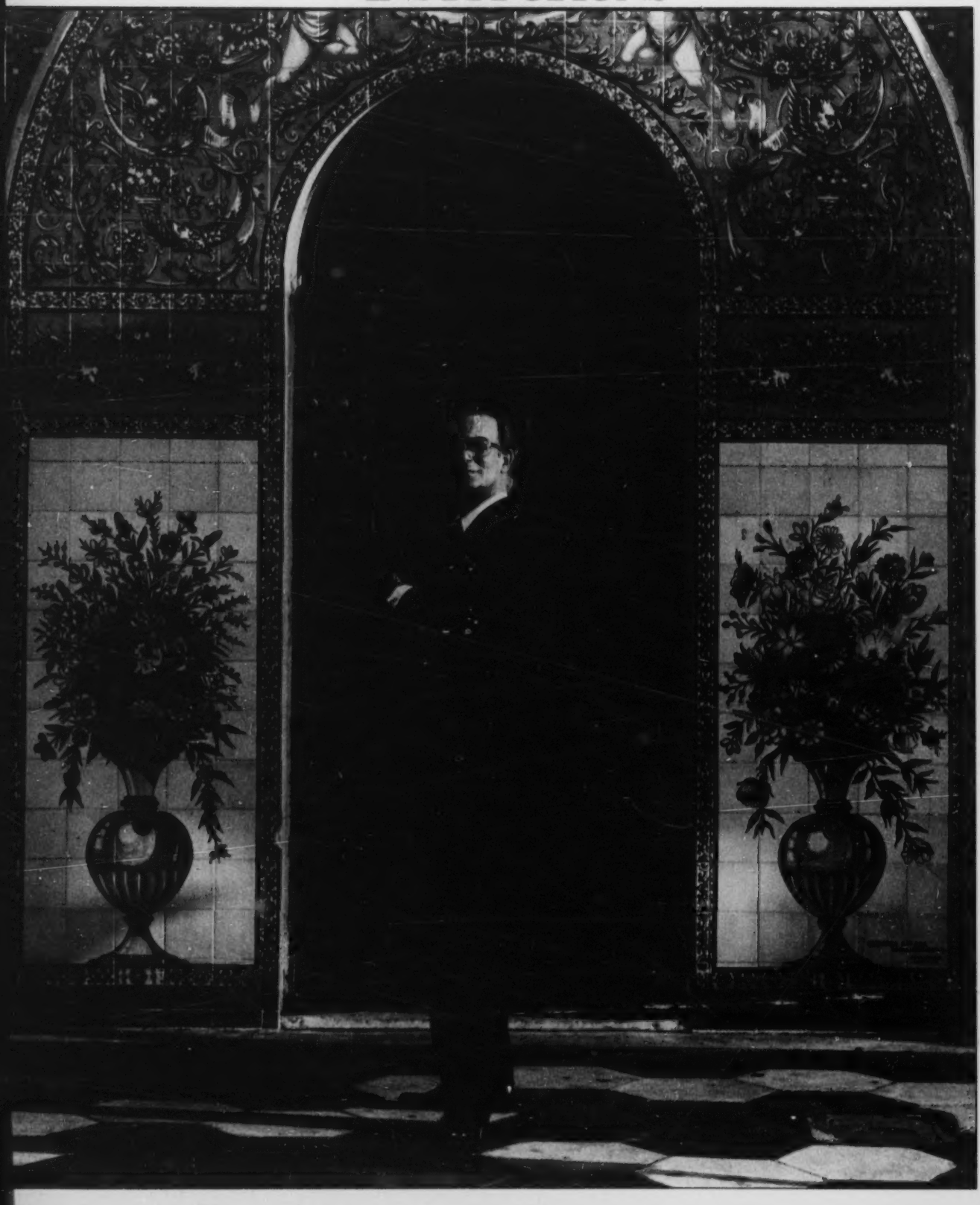
Faithful Top Independents followers will find a few omissions in our list of 100. For example, longtime favorites Paul Kovi and Tom Margittai opted not to participate this year. (There are speculations that their venerable New York restaurant, The Four Seasons, might soon be for sale.) Clifton's Brookdale Cafeteria closed for five months in 1986 to allow for "earthquake remodeling" and its sales took a dip.

Those restaurateurs that *are* here represent 21 states and the District of Columbia; they range in age from early 20s to late 70s. They attribute their success to a variety of qualities: patience, determination, creativity, intuition, skill and simple "good karma," yet none would deny that luck has been a major factor. Combined, their sales exceed $615 million.

Join us in our toast to the *crème de la crème*, America's Top 100 Independents for 1986.

Gail and Bob Longhi (l.) at Longhi's. Cesar Gonzmart (r.) at his Columbia Restaurant in Tampa.

RESTAURANTS & INSTITUTIONS



THE TOP 100

Rank	'85 Rank	Restaurant/city/owner	Sales	Opened	Seats	People served/year
1	1	**The Hilltop Steak House** Saugus, Mass. Frank Giuffrida	$26.9MM*	1951	1,300	2,350,000*
2	2	**Tavern on the Green** New York, N.Y. Warner LeRoy	24.9	1934	1,200	710,000
3	3	**Phillips Harborplace** Baltimore, Md. Brice, Shirley, Steven & Olivia Phillips; Paul Wall	15.0	1980	700	540,000*
4	3	**Anthony's Pier 4** Boston, Mass. Anthony Athanas & Family	13.6	1963	370*	680,000
5	5	**Smith & Wollensky** New York, N.Y. Alan Stillman	13.6	1977	400	300,000
6	10	**"21" Club** New York, N.Y. General Felt Industries & Partners	13.0**	1923	725	220,000*
7	7	**Spenger's Fish Grotto** Berkeley, Calif. Frank Spenger Jr. & Frank L. Spenger	12.9	1890	450	1,080,000*
8	9	**The Manor** West Orange, N.J. Harry Knowles & Family	12.4	1957	1,500	400,000
9	—	**Legal Sea Foods** Boston, Mass. The Berkowitz Family	11.3	1980	345	436,800
10	8	**Old San Francisco Steakhouse** Dallas, Texas Henry Reed	11.1	1971	750	504,000
11	10	**The Hard Rock Cafe** New York, N.Y. Isaac Tigrett	11.0	1984	725*	900,000*
12	15	**Old Original Bookbinder's** Philadelphia, Pa. John & Albert Taxin	10.0	1865	800	264,000*
13	12	**The Water Club** New York, N.Y. Michael D. O'Keeffe	10.0	1982	250	140,000
14	14	**Zehnder's of Frankenmuth** Frankenmuth, Mich. Edwin L. Zehnder	9.9	1856	1,300	975,000
15	18	**Kapok Tree Restaurant** Clearwater, Fla. Aaron R. Fodiman & Murray Steinfeld	9.6	1957	1,750	873,727
16	17	**Yesterday's** Fort Lauderdale, Fla. Peter Goldhahn	9.1**	1975	660	340,000*
17	12	**The Russian Tea Room** New York, N.Y. Faith Stewart-Gordon	9.0	1926	290	330,000*
18	—	**Haussner's Restaurant** Baltimore, Md. The Haussner Family	8.9*	1926	880	600,000
19	19	**The Rascal House** Miami Beach, Fla. Norman & Steve Stamler, Arthur Goodman	7.9	1954	425	1,710,000
20	22	**Mai-Kai** Fort Lauderdale, Fla. Robert Thorton	7.8	1956	500	210,000*
21	20	**Columbia Restaurant** Tampa, Fla. Cesar Gonzmart Family	7.6	1905	1,600	515,350*
22	21	**The Berghoff** Chicago, Ill. Herman Berghoff & Family	7.5	1898	700	900,000*
23	22	**Frankenmuth Bavarian Inn** Frankenmuth, Mich. William Zehnder Family	7.0**	1888	1,200	816,000
24	27	**The Hard Rock Cafe** Los Angeles, Calif. Peter Morton	7.0	1982	210	632,000
25	34	**Sardi's** New York, N.Y. S. Lichtenstein, I. Bloch, H. Klaris, L. Loewenthal	7.0**	1921	350	255,000

*R&I estimate **Owner estimate ©1987 Restaurants & Institutions, a Cahners publication

RESTAURANTS & INSTITUTIONS

Rank	'85 Rank	Restaurant/city/owner	Sales	Opened	Seats	People served/year
26	—	**Harry Cipriani** New York, N.Y. Arrigo Cipriani	6.8**	1985	80	135,000*
27	24	**Gibby's Steaks & Seafood** Fort Lauderdale, Fla. Donald, Eric & Steven Hersh	6.6	1978	600	400,000
28	—	**The Cliff House** San Francisco, Calif. Dan, Mary & John Hountalas	6.4	1850	301	340,000
29	39	**The Lobster House** Cape May, N.J. Wallace Laudeman	6.35	1940	27	420,000*
30	25	**Junior's Restaurant** Los Angeles, Calif. Bette & Marvin Saul	6.3	1959	238	728,000
31	—	**Longhi's** Lahaina, Hawaii Robert & Peter Longhi	6.2	1976	220	365,000
32	63	**Montgomery Inn Ribs King** Cincinnati, Ohio Ted Gregory	6.2	1951	380	725,000**
33	36	**Ralph & Kacoo's** New Orleans, La. Ralph & Catherine Olinde	6.18	1984	530	400,400
34	27	**15th Street Fisheries** Fort Lauderdale, Fla. Michael Hurst	6.1	1979	250	450,000
35	33	**Kowloon** Saugus, Mass. Bill & Madeline Wong	6.05	1960	1,200	1,095,000*
36	—	**Leona's** Chicago, Ill. The Toia Family	6.0	1950	400	880,000
37	27	**Joe Muer's Restaurant** Detroit, Mich. Joe, Thomas & William Muer	6.0*	1929	420	290,000
38	—	**Joe's Stone Crab** Miami Beach, Fla. Joanne Sawitz & Grace Weiss	5.98*	1913	380	264,000*
39	52	**Rustic Inn Crabhouse** Fort Lauderdale, Fla. Henry Oreal, Wayne Oreal & Wayne McDonald	5.9	1956	525	380,000
40	42	**The Omega Pancake House** Niles, Ill. George Stavropoulos & partners	5.85	1984	400	1,000,000
41	36	**Mike Fink** Covington, Ky. Benjamin Bernstein	5.8	1968	410	250,000
42	26	**Clyde's of Tysons Corner** Vienna, Va. Stewart Davidson & John Latham	5.8**	1963	512	220,000
43	21	**Tangier** Akron, Ohio Edward George	5.75	1955	1,500	210,000
44	51	**Bob Chinn's Crab House** Wheeling, Ill. Robert & Marilyn Chinn	5.5	1983	170	360,000
45	—	**The Ritz** Newport Beach, Calif. Hans & Charlene Prager	5.5	1977	250	150,000
46	48	**The Twin Oaks** Cranston, R.I. William DeAngelus Jr.	5.5	1933	550	480,000
47	—	**O'Sheas' Restaurant** Marco Island, Fla. Tom & Delores Shea	5.5**	1976	650	281,000
48	39	**The Angus Barn** Raleigh, N.C. Thad & Alice Eure	5.45	1960	550	220,000
49	—	**Pacific Dining Car** Los Angeles, Calif. Wesley A. Idol II	5.3	1921	185	226,300
50	52	**The Chateau** Waltham, Mass. Louis Novera & Marianne Skerry	5.2	1965	800	650,000

THE TOP 100

Rank	'85 Rank	Restaurant/city/owner	Sales	Opened	Seats	People served/year
51	—	**Tony's** Houston, Texas Tony Vallone	5.2	1965	160	125,000
52	—	**Union Oyster House** Boston, Mass. Joseph, Mary Ann & Mary Milano	5.15	1826	620	400,000
53	—	**Knickers Restaurant** Des Plaines, Ill. Nicholas Mitchell	5.1	1982	1,250	67,600
54	39	**The Nut Tree** Nut Tree, Calif. Edwin & Robert Power; Mary Helen Fairchild	5.1	1921	450	716,000
55	34	**Scott's, Jack London Square** Oakland, Calif. Malcolm Stroud & Martin Newman	5.01	1985	225	254,800
56	—	**Barrett's on Boston Harbor** Charlestown, Mass. Francis & Richard Barrett; Mary Barrett Costello	5.0	1985	395	208,000
57	42	**The Commissary** Philadelphia, Pa. Steven Poses	5.0	1977	100	720,000
58	52	**Pal's Cabin** West Orange, N.J. Donald Horn	5.0	1932	405	150,000
59	—	**The Rattlesnake Club** Denver, Colo. Michael McCarty & Jimmy Schmidt	5.0	1985	480	180,000
60	—	**Spago** Los Angeles, Calif. Wolfgang Puck & Barbara Lazaroff	5.0	1982	160	126,500
61	42	**Christ Cella** New York, N.Y. Richard T. Cella	5.0**	1926	290	128,700
62	42	**Bern's Steak House** Tampa, Fla. Bern Laxer	5.0*	1956	300	218,400
63	42	**Bishop's Restaurant** Lawrence, Mass. Victoria, Charles, Joseph & Abe Bashara	4.9	1949	550	363,000
64	—	**Maxwell's Plum** San Francisco, Calif. Maxwell's International	4.9	1981	600	225,000
65	52	**Sea Watch Restaurant** Fort Lauderdale, Fla. James Edmondson	4.8**	1973	250	300,000*
66	52	**Stars** San Francisco, Calif. Jeremiah Tower & Doyle Moon	4.75**	1984	145	125,000*
67	—	**Pittypat's Porch** Atlanta, Ga. Tony & Stanya Anthony	4.65	1967	300	185,000
68	—	**Carsons, The Place for Ribs** Chicago, Ill. The Carson Family	4.63	1978	170	260,000
69	58	**Café des Artistes** New York, N.Y. George Lang	4.6	1917	107	135,000
70	49	**The Smoke House** Burbank, Calif. Lee Spencer & Pat Heaney	4.58	1946	450	502,000
71	—	**Dixie Bar & Grill** Chicago, Ill. Roger Greenfield	4.5	1985	525	181,000
72	42	**Joe's Pier 52** New York, N.Y. Jane & Cynthia Kipness	4.5	1967	185	140,000
73	63	**Pilgreen's** Morrow, Ga. Rip & Geneva Pilgreen	4.5	1983	500	280,000
74	37	**The Pirate's House** Savannah, Ga. Herb Traub	4.5	1953	600	300,000
75	62	**Warehouse Restaurant** Marina del Rey, Calif. Burt Hixson	4.5	1967	400	198,000*

*R&I estimate. **Owner estimate. ©1987 Restaurants & Institutions, a Cahners publication.

&RESTAURANTS INSTITUTIONS

Rank	'85 Rank	Restaurant/city/owner	Sales	Opened	Seats	People served/year
76	58	**Dominique** Washington, D.C. Dominique D'Ermo	4.43	1974	185	182,000*
77	50	**Harris Ranch** Coalinga, Calif. John C. Harris	4.41	1977	535	571,026
78	—	**Weber's Inn** Ann Arbor, Mich. Herman E. Weber	4.41	1937	350	236,000
79	—	**Cricket's** Chicago, Ill. John B. Coleman	4.4	1976	105	74,000**
80	57	**Nick's Fishmarket** Chicago, Ill. Nick Nickolas & Jeff Harman	4.4	1977	160	100,000
81	—	**Seafood Shack Restaurant** Cortez, Fla. Ham Jones	4.3	1972	700	360,000
82	63	**The Coach & Six** Atlanta, Ga. Beverlee Soloff-Shere	4.25**	1962	197	138,600
83	—	**Dakota's** Dallas, Texas Dakota's Club Corp.	4.2**	1984	160	171,600
84	—	**Aurora** New York, N.Y. Joe Baum, Michael Whiteman & Dennis Sweeney	4.1*	1985	120	99,000
85	80	**The London Chop House** Detroit, Mich. Max J. Pincus	4.03	1939	181	100,578
86	63	**Fraunces Tavern** New York, N.Y. Robert & Jacqueline Norden	4.0	1793	400	188,000*
87	78	**The Hampshire House** Boston, Mass. Thomas A. Kershaw	4.0	1969	220	225,000
88	63	**Bookbinders Seafood House** Philadelphia, Pa. Sam & Richard Bookbinder	4.0**	1935	400	300,000
89	71	**El Cholo** Los Angeles, Calif. Ron Salisbury	4.0**	1927	280	330,000*
90	—	**Christo's** Brockton, Mass. Christos & Bessie Tsagaris	3.93	1964	500	660,000
91	—	**The Dan'l Webster Inn** Sandwich, Mass. The Vincent Catania Family	3.9**	1692	300	260,000
92	—	**Arne's Fine Seafood** Boston, Mass. Arne M. Soreide	3.85	1984	220	100,000
93	—	**Manhattan Cafe** New York, N.Y. Laurence Cresci	3.85	1983	260	124,000
94	69	**The Sardine Factory** Monterey, Calif. Ted Balestreri & Bert Catino	3.83	1968	226	107,000
95	61	**Brown Thomson II** West Hartford, Conn. Jay DuMond & Wallace Ronald	3.8	1985	400	273,000
96	—	**F. McLintocks** Shell Beach, Calif. Bruce Breault & Tunny Ortali	3.8	1973	350	280,000
97	71	**The Down Under** Fort Lauderdale, Fla. Leonce Picot & Al Kocab	3.8**	1968	240	107,000**
98	—	**The Gotham Bar & Grill** New York, N.Y. J. Kretchmer, R. & R. Rathe & J. Bliss	3.8**	1984	144	92,505
99	88	**Las Casuelas Terraza** Palm Springs, Calif. Florencio & Maria Delgado	3.8**	1979	210	265,000
100	69	**Monti's La Casa Vieja** Tempe, Ariz. Leonard F. Monti Sr.	3.74	1956	750	446,800

THE TOP 100

"At the beginning, we hadn't the foggiest notion of how this business worked. We made plenty of mistakes."
—Roger Berkowitz ■

The following are brief profiles of the restaurants that are new to our list this year.

THE BERKOWITZ FAMILY (9)
Legal Sea Foods, Boston, Mass.

When the Berkowitz Family—Roger, Marc and their father George—opened their first restaurant in 1967, not only did they have no restaurant experience but, says Roger, "No one really cared about seafood. It was fairly unpopular, and we thought we might be filling a niche that didn't exist." But the Berkowitzes' patience paid off and today they have six restaurants, a carry-out seafood store at Logan Airport and a thriving mail-order business.

Known as one of Boston's premier seafood houses, the 345-seat, Columbus Avenue Legal Sea Foods has a menu that includes more than 40 varieties of fresh fish daily. Since 1980, the restaurant has won every reader and editorial board poll of both the *Boston Globe* and *Boston* magazine for "Best Sea Food."

The Berkowitzes' most recent unit opened in Burlington, Mass., in early January. Future plans include more restaurants, expansion of mail-order sales and the rollout of a retail food line.

THE HAUSSNER FAMILY (18)
Haussner's Restaurant, Baltimore, Md.

Born in Bavaria, William Haussner began his chef's training at a young age. In 1925, he came to Baltimore and opened his first restaurant after only a year. He proved a quick-mover in other areas as well: Just three weeks after meeting Frances Wilke, he married her. Frances had arrived in Baltimore from Germany in 1924 and gone into the grocery business with her brother and father. A warm, hard-working woman who relaxes by piloting her own plane and playing the piano, she was William's business partner for 28 years, until his death in 1963. Today Frances is corporate president and still involved in the restaurant's operation.

Haussner's extensive German-American menu features more than 100 entrees, and all items are available for takeout. An in-house bakery supplies the restaurant and a variety of retail outlets in the Baltimore area.

ARRIGO CIPRIANI (26)
Harry Cipriani, New York, N.Y.

For those who love the famous Harry's Bar in Venice, New York's new Harry Cipriani feels just like home. First, there's the decor; the walls covered with soft peach fabric and hung with gold-framed heliographs of Venice. Then there's the furniture; the tables and chairs well below standard height but perfect, proportionally. And there's the clientele, the rich, the beautiful and the famous, plus all the wanna-be's.

The menu at Harry Cipriani closely resembles the original. There's the famous Harry's Bar club sandwich (said to contain half a chicken), the *carpaccio*, the long-strand pasta dishes (because, says one chef, stubby macaronis are not very graceful to eat), the soups, risottos, veal and fish dishes. And to drink there's the $8, peach-nectared champagne Bellini, invented at Harry's Bar.

Owner Arrigo Cipriani is the son of Giuseppe Cipriani, who founded Harry's Bar in Venice in 1931 with an American named Harry Pickering. While there are other Harry's Bars around the globe, none other is in any way connected with the original.

DAN, MARY & JOHN HOUNTALAS (28)
The Cliff House, San Francisco, Calif.

The Cliff House has been around since 1850, located in the same building since 1909. Husband and wife Dan and Mary Hountalas, and Dan's brother, John, have run it since 1973. With its view of the Pacific Ocean, the restaurant attracts both tourists and locals. Mary describes the atmosphere simply as "upbeat without being trendy."

Specializing in seafood, the Cliff House's three different menus (downstairs, upstairs lunch and upstairs dinner) incorporate plenty of old favorites —swordfish, prawns, scallops, salmon, snapper—and a number of more distinctive items such as squid steak, deviled crab in casserole and curried shellfish. The $16.75 "Fish Lover's Feast" —shrimp, oysters, fillet of sole, clams and jumbo prawns—is a perennial favorite, as is the chef's special prawns with feta cheese.

Michael Hurst, 15th Street Fisheries

ROBERT & PETER LONGHI (31)
Longhi's, Lahaina, Hawaii

In Lahaina, on the northwestern shore of Maui, Bob Longhi and his son Peter run a restaurant with $6.5 million in annual sales and a whopping 15% bottom line. They serve 1,000 people a day, getting rave reviews from custom-

Michael O'Keeffe's Water Club

ers and the press. When asked the secret to his success, Bob Longhi says, "I created the kind of restaurant that I love to eat in. I guess we've just got good karma."

Longhi grew up in Glen Falls, N.Y., went to Cornell, then on into the insurance business in New York and Washington. Soon he had his own business, selling pension plans to cities and counties. He had a six-figure salary, a life membership in the Million Dollar Roundtable, considerable real estate holdings and a home in fashionable Georgetown. Then in early 1976, he rewarded some employees with a trip to Hawaii where he happened into a Greek restaurant and asked the owner if he knew of anything for sale in the area.

A number of restaurants made our list after just one year in business: Harry Cipriani, Dixie Bar & Grill, Aurora. ■

"This place," was the reply, and within 24 hours, Longhi had decided to buy.

Longhi's has earned its reputation for fresh seafood and wonderful Italian dishes (many of the recipes are Bob's own) but also for Bob's somewhat unorthodox management style. His restaurant has no printed menu because Longhi *hates* being seated in a restaurant, looking at the menu and being told the kitchen is out of what he wants. He trains his staff rigorously and holds them in the highest regard, offering them a generous profit-sharing plan after just one year and an open invitation to eat at Longhi's at anytime for half-price. His dog Freddy is allowed to roam freely throughout the restaurant, which he designed without sharp angles because softly rounded curves are "healthier for the psyche." Longhi absolutely abhors pretension, and treats strangers and celebrities with equal respect. "Come in dressed anyway you want, and we'll treat you like you're wearing a tuxedo," he says. "I'm so tired of restaurants with poor food, high prices and snooty waiters. If you treat people the way you want to be treated and do the things you'd like to have done for you, you can't go wrong."

Which state has the most Top Independents? California, with 18. New York comes next with 15. Florida has 13. ■

THE TOIA FAMILY (36)
Leona's, Chicago, Ill.

Take a walk into the back room at Leona's and long before you see the phones, you'll hear them ringing. There are 20 of them and they ring all day, until 1 a.m. on weekdays and 2:30 a.m. on weekends. On a typical Friday, Leona's phones will ring about 1,200 times, from hungry Chicagoans placing orders for pasta, salads, sandwiches and most often pizza—thin, pan, double-deck, stuffed or on a whole-wheat crust. There are 100 delivery people on call at Leona's, and delivery accounts for approximately 65% of the restaurant's $6 million in sales.

It all began in 1950 when Leona Toia first opened her restaurant on Chicago's Belmont Avenue. (She later moved to the current location on North Sheffield.) Today, she runs the 400-seat operation with her son-in-law Ben and her grandsons Leon and Sam.

JOANNE SAWITZ & GRACE WEISS (38)
Joe's Stone Crab, Miami Beach, Fla.

One of the oldest restaurants on the

continued on page 48

Herman Weber, Webers Inn

THE TOP 100

The Dan'l Webster Inn dates from 1692—it's 295 years old! The Fraunces Tavern opened in 1793; The Union Oyster House in 1826. ■

Gold Coast—it opened in 1913—Joe's has become a legend and an inspiration to seafood houses everywhere. The savvy know to order the cold crab with mustard dipping sauce, the low-priced fried oysters, the creamed spinach and fried potatoes. They also know to arrive early or late to avoid the sardine syndrome: Joe's has only 380 seats and the maître d' really packs 'em in. (No reservations are accepted.) Joe's is open only during stone crab season: mid-October to mid-May.

HANS & CHARLENE PRAGER (45)
The Ritz, Newport Beach, Calif.

When Hans Prager was a young boy, his family fled Nazi Germany, but not before his father spent time at Buchenwald. The family got out safely in 1939 and settled in a refugee area of Shanghai. Prager found work as a busboy to help support the family. After his father and grandfather died, Prager moved to Los Angeles and got a job as a vegetable prep man at the restaurant Scandia.

In 1959, he joined Lawry's as executive chef and rose to the position of general manager of Lawry's specialty restaurant division. During the next seven years Prager opened a number of his own restaurants, including The Ritz on Balboa Peninsula in 1977. The restaurant moved to its location in Pacific Mutual Plaza in 1982.

With a traditional, continental menu, the Ritz appeals to an affluent clientele. Prager attributes the restaurant's success—$5.5 million in annual sales—to two lessons learned early in his career. "At Scandia, the emphasis was on *how* to do everything—how to select, prepare and serve fine meals," he says. "At Lawry's, I learned the *whys* of the business—why it's important to make your customers' dining experience a pleasure in every respect."

TOM & DELORES SHEA (47)
O'Sheas' Restaurant, Marco Island, Fla.

As a teenager, Tom Shea worked on the boardwalk in Wildwood, N.J., at a restaurant called Groff's. "It was a high-volume place and I did a lot of cooking because most of the men were off in the war," he says. Shea was then offered a scholarship to Cornell, but "never thought the restaurant business would become a career." He worked in the heating and air conditioning business for 25 years, then "retired" to Marco Island where he bought a small, 74-seat restaurant. The Sheas bought the O'Sheas' complex in 1975.

Delores Shea is described by her husband as "a loving wife and mother of five" before being bitten by the restaurant bug. Then, "she suddenly found a new field and loves it," he says. "She went from being an introvert to a real extrovert."

O'Sheas' offers casual dining in an elegant, waterfront setting—indoors or out. The 35-entree, reasonably-priced menu offers a large selection of seafood as well as beef, veal and poultry. A complete fresh seafood market is located on the premises.

WESLEY A. IDOL II (49)
Pacific Dining Car, Los Angeles, Calif.

In 1921, Fred Cook was an aspiring young tenor, an understudy of the great Caruso. Fred planned to make the opera his career, but when his voice failed early, he and his wife Grace left the East and headed for California. In Los Angeles, Fred and Grace built a replica of a dining car, inspired by a remodeled dining car/restaurant they had loved in New York. They made sure it had steel wheels (so it could easily be moved from one location to another) and rented a site, moving their restaurant to its home "in the dead of night" to avoid traffic. The Pacific Dining Car soon became one of the most popular dining spots in the area. In 1923, the dining car was rolled Uptown to 6th and Witmer, where it stands today.

The "21" Club, New York

You don't need precious prices to make* beaucoup *bucks. Ten of our Top 100 have dinner check averages of $10 or less. ■

Hungry patrons at The Union Oyster House consume 80 gallons of New England clam chowder and 1,500 oysters a day. ■

Jimmy Schmidt, The Rattlesnake Club

Fred and Grace's daugther Virginia and her husband Wes Idol purhased the restaurant in 1960; their son, Wes Idol II, purchased it from his mother in 1975. In 1981, the restaurant began serving 24 hours a day: breakfast, brunch, lunch, dinner, late supper and afternoon tea. Today the menu includes everything from pancakes to prime rib, and the wine list, some 300 labels. Dinner checks average $32 a person.

MARY ANN & JOSEPH MILANO (51)
MARY MILANO
The Union Oyster House, Boston, Mass.

Although no record has been found of when the structure was actually built, the building that houses The Union Oyster House has stood sturdily on Boston's Union Street, a major local landmark, for more than 250 years. It is the oldest restaurant in Boston and one of the oldest restaurants in continuous operation in the country.

The Atwood & Bacon Oyster House,

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STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

Many of our Top Independents own more than one restaurant. Below are some of these multi-unit operators, with a list of their other restaurants and a 1986 sales figure for each.

Warner LeRoy (#2)
Maxwell's Plum, New York ($7*) . . . *Potomac on the River,* Washington, D.C. ($10*)

Brice, Shirley, Stephen & Olivia Phillips; Paul Wall (#3)
Phillips Crab House, Ocean City, Md. (n/a) . . . *Phillips by the Sea,* Ocean City, Md. (n/a) . . . *Phillips Seafood House,* Ocean City, Md. (n/a) . . . *Phillips Waterside,* Norfolk, Va. ($5.3) . . . *Phillips Flagship,* Washington, D.C. ($9.1 projected)

Alan Stillman (#5)
The Manhattan Ocean Club, New York ($5.1) . . . *The Post House,* New York ($3.0) . . . *T.G.I. Friday's,* New York ($2.0)

The Berkowitz Family (#9)
Legal Sea Foods, Boston, Chestnut Hill ($10.2) . . . *Legal Sea Foods,* Cambridge, Mass. ($7.0) . . . *Legal Sea Foods,* Worcester, Mass.($2.6) . . . *Legal Sea Foods,* Logan Airport ($1.1)

Issac Tigrett (#11)
The Hard Rock Cafe, Dallas ($6.0) . . . *The Hard Rock Cafe,* London ($6.0) . . . *The Hard Rock Cafe,* Stockholm, Sweden (franchised) . . . *The Hard Rock Cafe,* Tokyo (joint venture)

Michael D. O'Keeffe (#13)
The River Cafe, New York ($5.2) . . . *Cafe Grand Central,* New York ($1.1) . . . *Herb McCarthy's Bowden Square,* Southhampton, N.Y. ($1.0)

Aaron Fodiman & Murray Steinfeld (#15)
Kapok Tree Restaurant, Madeira Beach, Fla. ($3.6) . . . *Kapok Tree Restaurant,* Fort Lauderdale, Fla. ($3.9)

Cesar Gonzmart Family (#21)
Columbia Restaurant, Sarasota, Fla. ($7.4) . . . *Columbia Restaurant,* St. Augustine, Fla. ($3.5) . . . *Columbia Restaurant,* Tampa ($2.5*)

Peter Morton (#24)
The Hard Rock Cafe, Chicago ($7.75) . . . *The Hard Rock Cafe,* San Francisco ($7.0) . . . *The Hard Rock Cafe,* Houston ($6.5)

Ralph & Kacoo Olinde (#33)
Ralph & Kacoo's, Baton Rouge, La. ($6.5*) . . . *Ralph & Kacoo's,* Baton Rouge, La. ($3.9) . . . *Ralph & Kacoo's,* Metairie, La. ($3.2) . . . *Ralph & Kacoo's,* Bossier City, La. ($3.8)

Benjamin L. Bernstein (#41)
Benjamins, Cincinnati ($1.35) . . . *Shirley's,* Cincinnati ($900,000) . . . *El Greco,* Southgate, Ky. ($1.6) . . . *BB Riverboats,* Covington, Ky. ($3.2) . . . *Crockett's River Cafe,* Newport, Ky. ($4.5 projected)

Francis & Richard Barrett, Mary Barrett Costello (#55)
Teel's Cabin, Abington, Mass. ($2.5) . . . *The Edmund Fitzgerald,* Quincy, Mass. ($2.2) . . . *Amelia's,* Quincy, Mass. ($1.0) . . . *Checker's Cafe,* Canton, Mass. ($2.0) . . . *Plumbley's,* Amherst, Mass. ($1.2) . . . *The Charlie Horse,* Kingston, Mass. ($1.2) . . . *The Charlie Horse,* Wareham, Mass. ($400,000) . . . *The Charlie Horse,* Lynn, Mass. ($650,000) . . . *The New Gazelle,* Quincy, Mass. (n/a)

Tony Vallone (#60)
Anthony's, Houston ($3.7)

Roger Greenfield (#71)
The American Grill, Glenview, Ill. ($2.0) . . . *The Coyote Grill,* Chicago ($2.7) . . . *Cucina Cucina,* Chicago ($3.0) . . . *The Diner,* Glenview, Ill. ($1.8)

Alan Stillman's Manhattan Ocean Club

THE TOP 100

Late in '86, The "21" Club got a new chairman and a new female chef. In early '87, it got a new menu and a new color scheme. ■

with its fabled semi-circular oyster bar, opened in 1826. It was at this bar that Daniel Webster stood each day eating three dozen oysters and washing them down with a tall tumbler of brandy and water. Today, the restaurant is run by brother and sister Joseph and Mary Ann Milano, and their mother Mary.

With its comfortable, family-style atmosphere, The Union Oyster House appeals to tourists and locals alike, and waits can approach two hours. (Reservations are not accepted.) And few are daunted by the Milanos simple dress code: "Wear anything you want, as long as you wear something."

NICHOLAS MITCHELL (52)
Knickers, Des Plaines, Ill.

Located in a northwest Chicago suburb, the 1,250-seat Knickers features many different atmospheres under one roof: formal dining room, garden room, ballroom, retail pastry shop, a private executive dining room and an outdoor cafe, where Knickers held whitefish boils for the first time this summer. In Knickers' main dining room the decor is Roaring '20s, and the specialties are 1-pound steaks and fresh seafood.

Knickers never stops evolving. In 1983, Mitchell added off-premises catering. In 1985, he realized the demand for his wonderful desserts and breads and added an off-premises baking division to serve local hotels and Knickers' catering operation. Today, catering accounts for $800,000 a year, and the retail bakery, another $35,000.

THE BARRETT FAMILY (55)
Barrett's on Boston Harbor, Charlestown, Mass.

In business together for 14 years, Francis Barrett, his son Richard and his daughter Mary Barrett Costello have built or bought 10 Massachusetts restaurants in that time. Barrett's on Boston Harbor, their most successful concept to date, opened in March 1985. Barrett's is a luxurious restaurant filled with Italian marble and brass, boasting a panoramic view of Boston Harbor and the U.S.S. Constitution. The menu features a wide range of items—poultry, steaks, prime rib, veal—with an emphasis on seafood. Barrett's serves lunch and dinner seven days, and an $11.95 Sunday brunch.

(L. to r.) Roger, George and Marc Berkowitz, Legal Sea Foods

MICHAEL McCARTY (58)
JIMMY SCHMIDT
The Rattlesnake Club, Denver, Colo.

Michael McCarty says he and Jimmy Schmidt decided to open their Rattlesnake Club in Denver because the city was ready for "the big time," and indeed it was. Serving 3,500 people a week, The Rattlesnake racked up $5 million in sales its first year.

McCarty and Schmidt seem unlikely partners. McCarty, who trained in France and opened Michael's in Santa Monica in 1979, is considered one of the founding fathers of California cuisine. He is gregarious and outgoing, with an infectious *joie de vivre* and a quick, ingratiating smile. Schmidt was born in Champaign, Ill., trained in France and Boston. Reserved and soft-spoken, he was the executive chef at Detroit's London Chop House for eight years prior to opening the Rattlesnake.

The three-tiered Rattlesnake is located in a renovated 19th-century brewery; cast-iron columns and vast copper vats blend beautifully with paintings by David Hockney and Roy Lichtenstein. Using such disparate elements as copper, glass, ebony, Italian marble and Southwestern turquoise, designer Henry Beer created a decor that is both playful and elegant.

Schmidt scours the country for the freshest, highest-quality ingredients possible, and his menus indicate a culinary imagination run wild. Denver's dining public adores the results: buffalo *carpaccio*; calamari rings with green chili mayonnaise and shark with papaya; ragout of snails with black beans; lamb chili with papaya, avocado and goat-cheese cream; and grilled lamb with cactus tortilla. For dessert, there's chocolate tequila ice cream and Schmidt's signature dessert, white chocolate ravioli.

Buoyed by their success, Schmidt and McCarty now are looking for other "great architectural sites" to build more Rattlesnakes. Plans are under way for restaurants in Detroit, New York,

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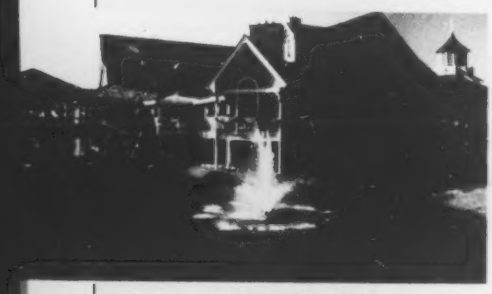
To the N.Y. Hard Rock's $11 million in sales, add another $4 million in Hard Rock clothing: T-shirts, sweatshirts, jackets, hats. ■

THE TOP 100



Jesse's Landing

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

Below is a list of some restaurants opened since January 1, 1986, that are likely to make our list next year.

Jesse's Landing, Seminole, Fla. Opened in March 1986 in a large Victorian mansion on Long Bayou, Jesse's Landing specializes in fresh local seafood, steaks and prime rib.

Ralph & Kacoo's, Baton Rouge, La. The newest of Ralph & Kacoo's five restaurants opened in June 1986. Serving Southern and Cajun-style seafood, the 660-seat restaurant is expected to gross $6.5 million its first year.

Le Bernardin, New York. The brother and sister team of Maguy and Gilbert Le Coze has captured Manhattan's fancy with their intimate restaurant in the Equitable Center on West 51st Street. Opened in late January 1986 with just 100 seats, Le Bernardin serves a *prix fixe* lunch ($35) and dinner ($55.)

Potomac-on-the-River, Washington, D.C. A large glittering restaurant opened at the edge of Georgetown in August by Warner LeRoy. Sales for Potomac's first year are expected to be "in excess of $10 million."

The Cadillac Bar, New York. Opened in July by Ken Newman (who also operates the $3.5 million Cadillac Bar in Houston) and partners Greg and Carol Wallace.

Twenty-Twenty, New York. Opened in June by Robert Ochs and the musical duo Ashford and Simpson, the restaurant, which cost close to $2 million to build, has a regional American menu and state-of-the-art sound/video system.

Washington, D.C., and possibly San Francisco and Newport Beach, Calif. "The menus will all be based on climate and local ingredients," Schmidt says. "Each will look different, but they'll all be Rattlesnakes, and all will share the same concept: Great dining should be fun and exiting."

WOLFGANG PUCK (59)
BARBARA LAZAROFF
Spago, Los Angeles, Calif.

In a recent profile of Wolfgang Puck, *USA Today* said: "He's hotter than a jalapeño corn muffin, cooler than grapefruit tequila sherbet and richer than lobster ravioli."

Puck (most call him Wolf) was born in Austria, the oldest of four children. His mother was a hotel chef, and although his stepfather frowned on his culinary ambitions, Puck entered hotel school at age 14. At age 19, he became an apprentice at the three-star L'Oustau de Baumanière in Les Baux-de-Provence, then went on to work in Monaco, Paris, New York and Indianapolis before landing in Los Angeles in 1975. As chef at Ma Maison, he gained something of a cult following.

In 1979 Puck met Barbara Lazaroff in a disco and the couple decided to buy a run-down Russian-Armenian restaurant on Sunset Boulevard. While Puck envisioned Spago (Italian slang for pasta) as a cozy, neighborhood bistro, the harbinger of Spago's good fortune came on opening night when 21 Rolls-Royces rolled into the parking lot and the owners had to turn away scores of would-be diners. Six years later, Spago still is one of the city's most star-studded and lucrative restaurants, LA's home for the rich and famished. Reservations are necessary weeks—and often months—in advance, and the only real complaint ever heard about Spago, which serves dinner only, is that it is just too hard to get into. "I could have worse problems," Puck says with a smile.

Born and raised in the Bronx, Lazaroff started college at age 16. Unlike her husband, whose career goals were well-defined, Lazaroff studied theater, art, dance, biology, psychology and chemistry before abandoning her goal of becoming a doctor and beginning a career in interior design. While Puck mans the wide-open kitchen, the outspoken and flamboyant Lazaroff plays the ebullient table-hopping hostess.

These days, Puck and Lazaroff have their hands full. They run both Spago and their newer Chinois on Main together, and Puck serves as a menu consultant to a number of hotels. He has also been touring to promote his newest cookbook, "The Wolfgang Puck Cookbook: Recipes from Spago, Chinois and Points East and West" (Random House, $19.95). A line of Wolfgang Puck frozen gourmet desserts was rolled out late last fall, and pizzas are still to come.

George Lang, Café des Artistes

Restaurants often become known for one particular item. At Spago, it's pizza. At The Russian Tea Room? Blinis, of course. ■

The Write Stuff: Tony Vallone, Wolfgang Puck and Jeremiah Tower all published successful cookbooks this year. ■

TONY VALLONE (60)
Tony's, Houston, Texas

Tony Vallone is a man who likes his food to speak for itself. On his Top Independents questionnaire, he left blank the spaces for "Landmark dates," "Owners background," and "Restaurant description." When it came time to describe his clientele, he did so only by saying

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THE TOP 100

Hello Deli: The Rascal House and Junior's have the two lowest dinner check averages: $5.50 and $6.25 respectively. ■

"Upper income and Yuppies." So we did a little digging, and what we found was this:

Tony's is the kind of restaurant where people go when they want a *very* special evening. Tony's food is a combination of the traditional and the improvisational; many of the recipes are Vallone's own. With claret-colored walls, starched white linens and fresh flowers on every table, Tony's dining room has been described as "one of the most beautiful in America."

Born and raised in Houston, Vallone is an intensely private person, shy and soft-spoken. But in the dining room he found his element, and he is the consummate host. ("You must be a choreographer to run a restaurant," he has said.) His first teacher and chief culinary influence was his paternal grandmother, Maria Aiello Vallone, who cooked for two restaurants and catered, all from her home kitchen. Vallone remembers that kitchen as "a kind of church and marketplace and workshop all in one room." It was a kitchen where no shortcuts were allowed, and it was here that he learned "Make it right, or don't make it."

Tony's food is elegant and somehow humble at the same time. The menu is a successful blend of *haute cuisine*, traditional entrees, "heart-healthy" dishes and surprisingly plain, homey foods such as Texas red chili, turkey with old-fashioned dressing and chicken-fried steak (which was originally listed on the menu as *Côte de Veau à la Crème*.) The expansive wine list has a special "indulgence" section of wines priced $250 and up.

MAXWELL'S INTERNATIONAL INC. (64)
Maxwell's Plum, San Francisco, Calif.

Built in 1981 at a cost of $7 million, this 650-seat restaurant appeals to tourists, locals and celebrities alike, with a continental menu and a commanding view of the bay, including Alcatraz Island. Executive Chef Hubert Henri creates two luncheon and two dinner specials daily: steaks, seafood, pasta and wild game.

Located in historic Ghirardelli Square, Maxwell's has six dining rooms, each with a different atmosphere, and 475 pots of fresh flowers that are changed every week. Warner LeRoy, who owns Maxwell's Plum in New York, designed the entire restaurant but is no longer affiliated with the operation.

THE CARSON FAMILY (68)
Carson's, The Place For Ribs, Chicago, Ill.

Carson's is the third successful restaurant concept for 70-year-old Chris Carson Sr. During the '40s and '50s he operated Peter Pan's Hamburgers; then came a string of private clubs called Millionaires Clubs. While Carson Sr. is semi-retired, sons Chris Jr. and Dean, daughter Donna and her husband Nick Giannis run the family's five restaurants, which Carson Jr. describes as "upscale rib shacks."

"Carsons is loud, fast-paced and fun," he says. "If you want great food and lots of it at reasonable prices, we're for you." Checks average $9 at lunch and $16.75 at dinner.

The largest of all the Carsons, the 170-seat Wells Street location opened in 1978. In 1982, the Carsons expanded to create a separate carryout store with a conveyorized link-up to the kitchen.

ROGER GREENFIELD (71)
Dixie Bar & Grill, Chicago, Ill.

In 1984, Roger Greenfield returned from the West Coast and gave Chicagoans a taste of California cuisine at The American Grill. Then, in September 1985, he set his sights on the city's burgeoning River North neighborhood and gave Chicago a big, boisterous bistro devoted to Cajun cooking called The Dixie Bar & Grill. With live jazz nightly and authentic renditions of Cajun classics such as jambalaya, bouillabaisse, gumbo and sweet potato pie, Dixie quickly became one of Chicago's hottest spots.

The 1,750-seat Kapok Tree is the largest restaurant on our list. Harry Cipriani is the smallest, with seating for just 80 people. ■

The Rascal House, Miami Beach, Fla.

What has set Dixie apart from its Cajun counterparts around the country, however, is staying power: The restaurant remains extremely popular while others have disappeared. Crowds complain about the waits of up to two hours yet clamor to get in all the same.

Dixie seats 525 people, with checks averaging $17 at lunch and $23 at dinner. A 200-seat banquet room was added this fall, and Greenfield estimates first year banquet sales of $1 million.

HAM JONES (81)
Seafood Shack Restaurant, Cortez, Fla.

A Florida native with a degree in mathematics and physics, Ham Jones put in five years at IBM at NASA's Cocoa Beach missile test range, and three years at the Manned Spacecraft Center in Houston before he succumbed to his *real* ambition and decided to open a restaurant.

Using savings, primarily in the form of IBM stock, Jones bought a neglected marina on the Intracoastal Waterway. He then approached 19 different banks and was summarily turned down by all. Finally, Jones found a bank who agreed to lend him $150,000, and the Seafood Shack was born. Its first year, the restaurant had 15 employees, 150 seats and sales of $560,000. Today, employees number 200, and yearly sales total $4.3 million.

A casual, waterfront seafood restaurant, the Seafood Shack boasts of courteous service, cleanliness and reasonable prices (checks average $8 at lunch and $13 at dinner) as well as a breath-

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THE TOP 100

At the Frankenmuth Bavarian Inn, the Zehnders serve 325 tons of chicken a year. A chicken dinner costs $9.95. ■

taking view of the sunset over Sarasota Bay. Docking facilities are available for boats of up to 70 feet. And although the Seafood Shack often serves 2,000 people a day in season, Jones still considers his restaurant a "small, independent operation."

DAKOTA'S CLUB CORP. (83)
Dakota's, Dallas, Texas

In a city of soaring skyscrapers, a successful restaurant exists because someone had the good sense to look down. Dakota's, opened in December 1984, is located beneath a busy Dallas street, opposite the Lincoln Property Co's. Lincoln Plaza. An underground pedestrian tunnel connects it to the 45-story office building.

While Dakota's menu is not unusually large, it does include something to satisfy every craving: steaks, fresh fish, pasta, veal, large salads, burgers, chili, wild game and a variety of daily specials, most of them grilled over native woods. Dakota's was designed with the business customer in mind and management promotes a 25-minute luncheon turnaround time.

The decor at Dakota's is warm and clubby, with gas-fed wall sconces, ceiling fans, old-fashioned tavern chairs and a hand-cut marble floor. Beyond the large French doors, Dakota's has an 1,800-square-foot patio.

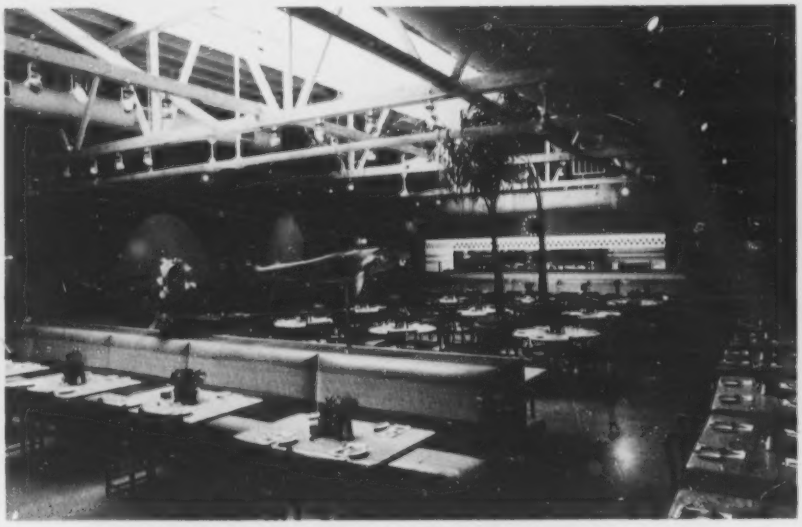
JOE BAUM, MICHAEL WHITEMAN (84)
DENNIS SWEENEY
Aurora, New York, N.Y.

Having masterminded such well-known Manhattan restaurants as Windows on the World and The Four Seasons, Joe Baum felt it was time to create a place for himself. The result is Aurora, a striking restaurant named for the goddess of dawn. Writing recently in *Travel & Leisure* magazine, fellow Top Independent George Lang said of Aurora: "If you visit only one New York restaurant in 1986, this should be it."

Baum was raised at his parents' kosher hotel in Saratoga, N.Y. He was with Restaurant Associates from 1953 to 1970, when he left to form the Joseph Baum Co., a consulting firm that he still runs. With Aurora, his goal was a restaurant that would combine old world elegance and sophistication, one that would attract the city's "power" elite with a club-like atmosphere during the day and magically transform itself into a romantic destination at night. Most importantly, Baum wanted Aurora to be every bit as appealing to women as it is to men. He and partners Whiteman and Sweeney (who also are partners in the Joseph Baum Co.) turned to architect Philip George and graphic designer Milton Glaser for help.

Aurora might very well be one of the most meticulously designed restaurants in history. Baum and Glaser overlooked no detail, from the silver salt-and-spice cellars to the matchbooks. Take the upholstery, for instance: The team rejected close to 100 concepts before deciding on the butter brown, glove-leather for their chairs and banquettes. At Aurora the masculine darkness of the wood-paneled walls is offset by the whimsical, pale pink lamps that float like bubbles above the dining room, and the gracefully curving pink granite bar.

Parisian Chef Gerard Pangaud changes the menu daily, emphasizing fresh, seasonal ingredients and graceful, elegant presentations. He describes his food simply as "cuisine of the heart." Recent dinner offerings include a mixed grill of baby chicken, squab and quail with fried shoestring potatoes; sautéed sweetbreads with truffled potatoes; and baked salmon in a horseradish crust. Checks average $40 at lunch and $60 at dinner.



Dixie Bar & Grill, Chicago

1986 was Anthony Athanas' 62nd year in foodservice. Frances Haussner is a 60-year vet; Herman Weber has been at it 50 years. ■

CHRISTOS & BESSIE TSAGANIS (90)
Christo's, Brockton, Mass.

Christos Tsaganis built his business on basics: a "warm hello" and a "glad you came," ample portions, hearty food and fast service. Tsaganis, now 60 years old, immigrated from Greece to Massachusetts. After marrying Bessie, the two started a little luncheonette in Brockton. By 1964 they were so successful that they opened Christo's—a 115-seat restaurant that today has 500 seats, five dining rooms and a lounge, all in 18,000 square feet. Prices at Christo's are low ($5 at lunch, $10 at dinner) and volume is high; close to 13,000 people are served each week. The menu is Greek-American: charbroiled souvlakia, shrimp, large salads, roast beef,

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THE TOP 100

By our best estimate, The Hilltop Steakhouse serves 2.3 million people each year. The Rascal House serves 1.7 million. ■

fried chicken, baked lamb, Virginia ham and pizzas. The family opened Christo's Two in 1976; Bessie runs that unit while Christos runs the original.

ARNE SOREIDE (92)
Arne's Fine Seafood, Boston, Mass.

Born in Bergen, Norway, Soreide went to work for Scandinavian Airlines' catering division in Oslo at age 18. He went on to a number of food and beverage positions at The Brock Hotel Corp., returned to Scandinavian Airlines to set up a foodservice division in Oslo, then returned once again to Brock. In 1982, Soreide came to Boston to manage a group of restaurants at Quincy Market. He opened Arne's in May 1984.

Located in Boston's Copley Place, a successful retail complex, Arne's is an upscale seafood house with a Scandinavian decor. Arne's extensive seasonal menus offer close to 20 fresh fish daily, plus a number of special entrees such as shrimp saganaki, baked squid provencal and tuna peppercorn steak. Arne's oyster bar, open from 11 a.m. to midnight seven days, recently was expanded to seat 212. Soreide opened his second Arne's in Hartford, Conn., in February.

BRUCE BREAULT & TUNNY ORTALI (96)
F. McLintock's Saloon & Dining House, Shell Beach, Calif.

Housed in a former "gambling and pleasure saloon," the 350-seat McLintock's is an easy-going, family-style restaurant specializing in large, aged steaks and ribs, barbecued in an oak wood pit. In creating the Western-style decor, the owners retained a number of artifacts from the building's earlier and wilder days, such as swinging saloon doors, crap tables, horseshoes and branding irons. Located in an area of Pismo Beach, Calif., McLintock's prides itself on consistent food quality, good value (lunch checks average $5; dinner checks, $14.50) a lively yet relaxing atmosphere and a splendid ocean view.

When owners Breault and Ortali found that their customers would love to eat McLintock's food *outside* the restaurant, they started offering three products for retail sale—salsa, Trail Camp beans and barbecue sauce. Available in grocery stores around the state, these products generate an additional $550,000 in revenue annually.

Grilled pigeon breast with huckleberry sauce at Spago.

JEROME KRETCHMER, (98)
RICHARD RATHE, ROBERT RATHE, JEFF BLISS
The Gotham Bar & Grill, New York, N.Y.

Opened in March 1984, The Gotham Bar & Grill got off to a slow start. While the customers loved the fanciful, postmodern decor, the food received only fair reviews. So the owners brought in Chef Alfred Portale, a Culinary Institute of America graduate who had finished first in his class and received the coveted "Most Outstanding Student" award. Before joining the staff of the Gotham, Portale had worked with some of France's best-known chefs: in Eugenie-les-Bain with Michel Guérard, with the Troisgros Brothers in Roânne, with Jacques Maximim in New York.

Portale had the touch that Gotham needed, and the restaurant took off. *The New York Times* awarded it three stars, praising its visually dazzling dishes and impressive culinary consistency.

Portale's repertoire centers on sautées and grills. He changes the menu every two to three months. "I am a conservative in cooking," he says. "No wild experiments just to be different." With checks averaging $30 at lunch and $46 at dinner, The Gotham caters to an upscale clientele. But, says Manager J. Scott Carney, "We give tremendous quality . . . We're a very good value for a three-star restaurant."

Kretchmer, Rathe, Rathe and Bliss were restaurant neophytes when they opened the Gotham. Kretchmer, a former state legislator and city sanitation commissioner, now is a real estate developer; Bliss is his partner. The Rathes operate a successful interior design and display company.

The Hilltop Steakhouse has a retail butcher shop on-premises that sells an estimated $17.1 million worth of beef each year. ■

■ OPERATOR OFFERINGS

Mushroom Lover's Dream

The giant puff mushroom, with an average weight of 6 pounds, is a light appetizer at Spiaggia.

Giant puff mushrooms, usually found in the forests of Oregon, as well as the Cascade Mountains in Washington, are now found on Spiaggia's menu in Chicago.

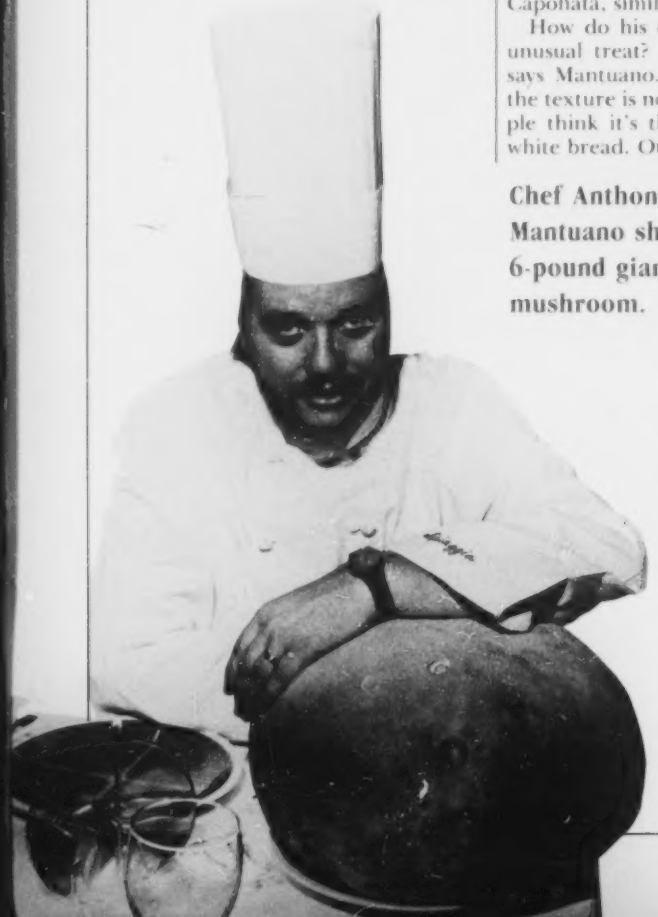
Chef Anthony Mantuano describes the first giant puff mushroom he received. "I carved it into 1-inch steaks," Mantuano says. "Then I lightly charcoal-grilled it and dressed it with extra virgin olive oil. When the mushroom is grilled it marks like a swordfish. I added a little fresh lemon juice, rosemary and crushed black peppercorns." Mantuano sells this dish as an appetizer for $6.95.

Mantuano has found a local supplier of these mushrooms, who finds them in forest preserves and other locales throughout Northeast Illinois. The season for giant puff mushrooms is short, usually lasting only the months of September and October.

These mushrooms have a short shelf life, but will last frozen for at least six months, according to the supplier. They should be snow white in color. If any yellowish-green tint is seen, the mushroom should be discarded.

The mushrooms can range in size from the size of a baseball to two basketballs put side by side. In every batch that Mantuano receives, there is at least one large mushroom that he can cut into 20 to 24 steaks. The smaller ones he roasts whole and gives the same treatment as the larger mushrooms. Mantuano also uses the mushrooms as an ingredient in dishes such as Caponata, similar to ratatouille.

How do his customers react to this unusual treat? "Compare it to tofu," says Mantuano. "Either you like it or the texture is not appealing. Some people think it's the greatest thing since white bread. Others . . ." —*K.M.*



Chef Anthony Mantuano shows off a 6-pound giant puff mushroom.

■ R&I DATA

FOOD COST INDEX: LOWER FOOD COSTS RING IN THE NEW YEAR

The market-basket total for *R&I*'s January Food Cost Index survey continues to show a decline. November basket total—$109.44; December $107.31; current $105.56. Market-basket total for January 1986, excluding frying oil and shortening, was $109.42. Hamburger, chicken, milk, peach and sugar prices remain consistent with month-ago figures.

	1/87	12/86	1/86
Hamburger (lb. 85% lean)	$1.25	- 1	3
Chicken (lb./cut for frying)	.97	1	26
N.Y. strip steak (lb./avg.)	3.19	-12	-19
Bread (Pullman loaf)	.72	- 8	-16
Lettuce (iceberg/head)	.48	-17	-26
French fries (30 lb.)	11.05	- 4	- 5
Tomatoes (lb.)	.54	- 4	-10
Milk (gal.)	1.76	1	- 3
Eggs (doz.)	.78	- 5	1
Peaches (case/#10)	17.41	0	-15
Peas (case/#10)	13.51	20	0
Frozen beans (30 lb.)	12.20	-21	-27
Ice cream (vanilla/gal.)	3.40	4	2
Butter (lb.)	1.81	.7	—
Cheddar cheese (lb.)	1.69	- 4	—
Sugar (100 lb.)	30.09	- 1	4
Coffee (lb.)	3.04	- 8	15
Breaded fish portions (lb.)	1.67	13	19

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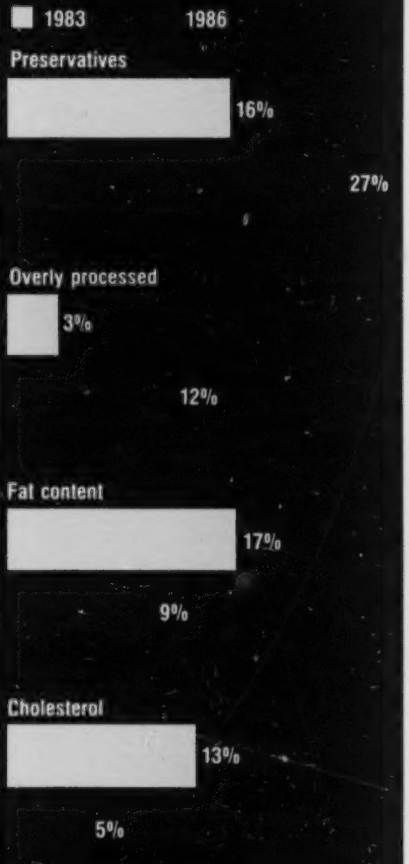
FOOD

R&I DATA

NUTRITIONAL CONCERN DECLINES

According to the Food Marketing Institute Survey of Shoppers, fewer people in 1986 were concerned about the nutritional content of what they ate than were in 1983. The percentage of those answering that they were very concerned in 1983 was 64%, compared to 58% in 1986. The nutritional concerns respondents had changed as well.



Source: Food Marketing Institute Survey of Shoppers

■ **HEALTHLINE**

Fontainebleau Hilton Gets into the Spa Scene

Pampering, recreation and relaxation are the key elements of a new regimen the Fontainebleau Hilton, Miami, Fla., is offering to business travelers. The hotel will open a "world class" beachfront spa where guests will be pampered with massage, loofah, sauna, steam and Jacuzzi, tested on Nautilus and rowing machines, challenged on lighted all-weather tennis courts and Catamaran sailboats, and, finally, given a chance to relax in the free-form rock grotto pool with cascading waterfalls.

"We plan to attract a segment of the upscale vacation market looking for a spa holiday. Business travelers will be able to unwind with a massage and steam or work out with state-of-the-art equipment after a day of meetings," says Marc H. Siegel, president of Spa-Vest Inc., owner and operator of The Spa.

The Spa also will feature a retail shop and Granny Feelgoods, a natural foods restaurant, located on the Spa Veranda. Phase I of the project is finished, while Phase II, which will include the development of an exclusive health retreat, will be completed later this year.

Improve Eating Habits with HealthFare USA

Health professionals and educators working to improve eating habits in their communities will find a new tool available this spring. HealthFare USA is the new name of the National Health Screening Council, the non-profit organization that has presented thousands of community health fairs since 1975. Health fairs presented by HealthFare USA will include a Nutrition Learning Center developed with the American Dietetic Association.

Beginning with the spring 1987 National Health Fair Program, the Nutrition Learning Center will become a formal element of the organization's basic health fair model. Individual health fair sites traditionally have been encouraged to offer nutrition education, according to Jane Mayfield, HealthFare USA executive vice president for program development. "Now we have a uniform way to make people aware of the role of diet in health maintenance and disease prevention," she explains.

At the Nutrition Learning Center, health fair visitors will teach themselves about topics ranging from fiber and calcium to anorexia nervosa and diabetes using simple quiz cards or quiz boards. Health fair volunteers do not diagnose or offer specific case-by-case advice. But individuals with atypical screening results or personal concerns will be directed to the medical staff at the summary and referral station where they will be given information about local health-care sources.

One-Minute Fitness at Callaway Gardens

Take a bunch of executives who want to integrate good management skills with wellness, put them in a serene setting and you have The One-Minute Manager Gets Fit Executive Wellness Program. Georgia's exclusive Callaway Gardens resort is the site of the two-day and seven-day seminars.

Dr. Kenneth Blanchard, author of the "One-Minute Manager" series of books, is the originator of the combined program and picked Callaway Gardens to hold the seminars. The two-day weekend program concentrates on communicating the management-wellness concepts and includes recreation time. Seven-day seminars also include comprehensive medical evaluation, individual exercise prescription, fitness instruction, individual goal-setting conferences and motivational sessions. For more information, call (800) 854-1013. *--N.B.*

The One Minute Manager Gets Fit at Callaway Gardens

ACTION EXPRESS

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